



KANSAS BOARD OF REGENTS

1000 SW JACKSON • SUITE 520 • TOPEKA, KS 66612-1368

TELEPHONE – 785-296-3421
FAX – 785-296-0983
www.kansasregents.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 19, 2005

BOARD OF REGENTS ADOPTS RESOLUTION OPPOSING TABOR

TABOR Would Devastate Higher Education in Kansas

(TOPEKA) – Today the Kansas Board of Regents adopted a resolution that formally opposes any and all efforts to establish constitutional or statutory revenue and expenditure limits, such as the Taxpayer’s Bill of Rights (TABOR), in the state of Kansas.

“Fiscal limitation proposals such as TABOR would be devastating to higher education and all public services in Kansas,” said Donna Shank, Chair of the Board of Regents. “One only has to look next door to the state of Colorado to see firsthand how Colorado’s higher education institutions are suffering under TABOR.”

TABOR is a proposed state constitutional amendment that would limit state revenues and expenditures under a highly restrictive formula – the annual change in population plus inflation. The Kansas TABOR proposal is modeled after a similar measure approved in the state of Colorado in 1992. Colorado’s economy and public services have suffered dramatically since TABOR’s adoption. Furthermore, Colorado’s higher education system has arguably been singled out for TABOR’s most severe devastation.

“In Colorado, tuition and fees have risen sharply and student financial aid has been reduced dramatically due to that state’s budget limitations,” said Regent Nelson Galle. “I am truly concerned that TABOR would price low and middle income Kansans out of a college education.”

“Access to affordable high quality educational opportunities is a necessary ingredient for economic growth,” added Reginald L. Robinson, President and CEO of the Board of Regents. “A vibrant and well-funded higher education system is increasingly necessary for Kansans to succeed in today’s ever-changing and competitive global economic environment.”

Shank asked, “If TABOR is such an economic cure-all, why are Colorado’s top leaders, including the pro-TABOR governor, now trying to stop TABOR?”

--30--

*For more information contact
Kip Peterson, Director for Government Relations & Communications, at (785) 296-3421.*

Visit the Kansas Board of Regents on the Web at www.kansasregents.org.

The Board adopted the following formal resolution:

WHEREAS, the Kansas Board of Regents respects the important role the Kansas Constitution assigns to the State Legislature, whose Members are held accountable by a popular vote of their constituents, to determine state fiscal priorities for the benefit of the people of Kansas; and

WHEREAS, the Kansas Board of Regents believes that the State Legislature fulfills fundamental aspects of its constitutional responsibilities through the annual budget process, which results in recurring taxation and spending decisions that recognize that the state's fiscal and economic environment is not static, but instead is constantly changing; and

WHEREAS, the Kansas Board of Regents believes that constitutional or statutory limits on state revenues and expenditures would severely restrict the state's ability to invest in vital public services, such as higher education, which are critical to the state's economic growth and well-being; and

WHEREAS, the Kansas Board of Regents believes that a constitutional amendment or statutory provision that permanently and arbitrarily restricts state spending and taxation severely diminishes legislative authority, reduces legislators' responsiveness to their constituents, and limits the state's ability to respond to rapidly changing economic and community needs; and

WHEREAS, the Kansas Board of Regents is aware of the damage inflicted upon vital public services in the state of Colorado, in particular, the harm to that state's higher education system, which has occurred since Colorado adopted a constitutional revenue and expenditure limitation, known as the Taxpayer's Bill of Rights (TABOR), in 1992; and

WHEREAS, the Kansas Board of Regents believes that the state of Kansas has a long and proud tradition of making public higher education obtainable by all its citizens regardless of income, and that the Colorado experience demonstrates how constitutional or statutory revenue and expenditure limitations jeopardize this tradition, severely reducing student financial aid while dramatically raising tuition costs, pricing low and middle income students out of a college degree, ultimately making higher education affordable only for the rich; and

WHEREAS, the Kansas Board of Regents believes that access to affordable high quality educational opportunities, which would be restricted by constitutional or statutory revenue and expenditure limitations, is increasingly necessary for Kansans to succeed in today's ever-changing and competitive global economic environment.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE GREAT STATE OF KANSAS:

That on October 19, 2005, the Kansas Board of Regents hereby expresses its grave concern about constitutional or statutory revenue and expenditure limitations that restrict the state's ability to invest in higher education and other vital public services thus diminishing the state's and individual Kansans' abilities to compete in today's knowledge-based global economy, and, therefore, **formally opposes any and all efforts, including the so-called Taxpayer's Bill of Rights, to establish such fiscal limitations in the State of Kansas.**

Furthermore, the Kansas Board of Regents hereby encourages the governing boards of the 30 institutions of higher education it coordinates to consider the adoption of similar resolutions that oppose the establishment of constitutional or statutory revenue and expenditure limitations in Kansas.